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BOROUGH OF CONGLETON.

INTERIM REPORT

ON THE

Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the Borough

For the Year ended 31st December, 1939.

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Medical Officer of Health—Arnold Brown, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H., commenced duty 1st June, 1939.

H. P. Harpur, B.A., M.B., B.Ch., B.A.O., M.D.,—resigned 31st May, 1939.

Sanitary Inspector.—W. J. Eversett, Cert. R.S.I., etc.

Additional Sanitary Inspector.—H. Street, Cert. R.S.I.

To the Mayor, Aldermen, and Councillors of the Borough of Congleton

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Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present my Report on the Health and Sanitary Circumstances of the Borough of Congleton for the year ended 31st December, 1939. This report has been compiled as laid down in Circulars Nos. 1961 and 2067 of the Ministry of Health, and has been considerably curtailed.

Owing to the outbreak of war it has been found necessary to discontinue activities in connection with the representation of clearance areas and insanitary houses.

In the last few months of the year there was a considerable increase in the number of notifications of diphtheria and scarlet fever. Particulars of this increased incidence will be found later in this report.

The Borough of Congleton received slightly over 900 mothers and children under the Government evacuation scheme. At the end of the year only half of this number still remained in the area. There was no evidence that the increased incidence of infectious disease in the last quarter of the year was due to evacuation, as very few cases were discovered amongst evacuees, and the cases occurring amongst local children were not, for the most part, in houses used as billets.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions.

The customary notes on social conditions are not requested by the Ministry of Health for the year ending 31st December, 1939.

Extracts from Vital Statistics.

		Total.	Male.	Female.
Live births	Legitimate ...	208	89	119
	Illegitimate ...	5	1	4
Still births		15	9	6

Birth rate per 1,000 estimated average population mid. 1939, - 14.1

Still birth rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births, - 65.8

	Total.	Male.	Female.
Deaths	199	100	99
Death rate per 1,000 estimated average population		13	

Deaths from Puerperal causes (headings 29 and 30 of the Registrar General's short list):—

	No. of Deaths.	Death rate per 1,000 total (live and still) births.
No. 29—Puerperal Sepsis ...	0	0
No. 30—Other Puerperal causes	1	4.4
Total	1	4.4

Death rate of Infants under 1 year of age:—

All Infants per 1,000 live births...	56.3
Legitimate infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	57.7
Illegitimate infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	0

	Total	Male.	Female.
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	26	11	15
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	0	0	0
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages) ...	0	0	0
Deaths from Diarrhœa (under 2 years of age)	0	0	0

There was no unusual or excessive mortality during the year which requires comment.

There does not appear to be any occupation having a prejudicial effect on health.

SECTION B.

General Provision of Health Services for the Area.

The following additions may be noted :—

1. Facilities for nursing in the home have been increased by the appointment of a District Nurse at Mossley.

2. A large house, "The Quinta," about one mile from the centre of the town, was generously placed at the disposal of the local authority by the owner, and has been used continuously as a home for evacuees who, on account of uncleanly habits, were regarded as unsuitable for billeting in private houses.

SECTION C.

Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.

Water.—There have been no new sources of public supply during the period under review, notwithstanding the increased consumption of water, particularly at the C.W.S. milk factory. Further consideration has been given to the question of augmenting the present supplies, which has resulted in the Council's experts advising the Council to abandon the possibilities of obtaining any permanent increased yields from the existing Forge and College grounds. The scheme now advised is the sinking of a bore-hole at Hug's Bridge, Bosley, and the Ministry of Health's sanction is to be obtained accordingly.

In the meantime it is hoped that increased yields from the College grounds may be obtained to meet increased demands which cannot be met by the existing supplies, particularly in periods of drought.

18 samples were examined by the County Analysts during the year and a satisfactory report was given in each case.

Drainage and Sewerage.—The scheme to deal with the drainage and sewage disposal of the West Heath area and the Astbury Village in the Congleton Rural area has been proceeding in the preparation of a survey and plans, but owing to the present war conditions and the fact that the Minister of Health will not sanction loans, except in very extenuating circumstances, it has been decided to postpone this scheme for the time being.

Public Cleansing.—There were no changes during the year in the arrangements for public cleansing.

Closet Accommodation:—

Number of conversions from pails to W.C. during 1939 ...	47
Number of conversions from slop closets to pail closets during 1939	1
Number of pail closets in built-up areas	237

Sanitary Inspection.—1 statutory and 636 informal notices were served by the Sanitary Inspector, 628 of which were complied with, during the year.

SECTION D.

Housing.

The customary table of activities under the Housing Acts is omitted.

Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation	51
Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to above) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	286
Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit by service of informal action	156
Number of houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	1
Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	2
Number of separate tenements in respect of which Closing Orders were made	1
Number of dwellings overcrowded at the end of the year	102
Number of families dwelling therein	102
Number of persons dwelling therein	668

Clearance areas represented, declared and orders made during 1939—5 areas, containing 26 dwelling houses

Clearance areas declared and orders made—4 areas, containing 11 dwelling houses

Clearance areas represented—3

Clearance orders made in 1939 in respect of areas represented and declared during 1938—2, containing 6 dwelling houses

Clearance orders confirmed by the Minister of Health—2

On the outbreak of war activity was immediately suspended on the representation of clearance areas. I estimate that at least a further 200 houses in the Borough should be dealt with by demolition. The position of occupiers of houses already condemned is particulary distressing, as they cannot be re-housed, and their homes cannot be so repaired as to make them fit for human habitation. They are, therefore, compelled to live in bad houses until building is recommenced after the war, unless they are fortunate enough to obtain alternative accommodation either in privately owned houses or in existing Council houses.

On account of the shortage of building materials and labour, difficulty is experienced in doing necessary repairs to houses, the subject of informal notices.

SECTION E.

Inspection and Supervision of Foods.

Milk Supply:—

Number of informal notices respecting cow sheds and dairies issued and complied with 24

Number of producers of "Accredited" Milk ... 27
13 of whom are retailers.

There are no producers of Tuberculin-tested milk.

Number of licenses issued by the Corporation to distributors of Pasteurised milk 2

2 out of 33 mixed milk samples examined for tubercle bacilli were found to be positive and reported to the County Medical Officer of Health.

Meat and other Foods.—

Total amount of meat destroyed was 1,678 lbs.

All samples of food and drugs examined by the Public Analyst during the year were found to be of the desired quality.

No cases of food poisoning were notified.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of and Control over Infectious Diseases.

There was a serious increased incidence of diphtheria in the last quarter of the year, when 29 cases occurred. The cases were not confined to any particular school or area in the town, and there was no connection between cases notified and houses where evacuees were billeted.

The Council instituted a scheme for the immunisation against diphtheria of all children under 14 whose parents would consent to the operation.

Persons immunised privately by Medical practitioners.

Under school age	...	10
Of school age	...	79
Total	...	89

Persons immunised under Council's scheme up to 31st December, 1939.

Under school age	...	15
Of school age	...	127
Total	...	142

Persons in process of immunisation under Council's scheme at 31st December, 1939.

Under school age	...	82
Of school age	...	336
Total	...	418

The method of immunisation used is two injections of 0.1 c.c. and 0.5 c.c. respectively of Messrs. Burrough's Wellcome's Diphtheria Prophylactic Alum Precipitated, with an interval of three weeks between each injection.

Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the Year 1939.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified	Cases Admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Smallpox	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever	24	17	0
Diphtheria	44	37	2
Enteric Fever (including paratyphoid)	0	0	0
Puerperal Pyrexia	4	1	0
Pneumonia...	29	1	2
Erysipelas	4	1	0
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	2	0	0
Measles	5	0	0
Whooping Cough	24	0	0

Age Distribution of Infectious Diseases.

Disease.	Under 1 yr.	1-	2-	3-	4-	5-	10-	15-	20-	35-	45-	65 and over
Scarlet Fever ...				3	1	12	6	2				
Diphtheria ...			1	3	3	23	10	1	2		1	
Puerperal Pyrexia ...									2	2		
Pneumonia ...		1	2	2	1	2		3	7	4	4	3
Erysipelas ...									1		2	1
Ophthalmia Neonatorum ...	2											
Measles ...	2					2						
Whooping Cough ...	2	2	3	6		11						

Tuberculosis.

New Cases and Mortality during 1939.

Age Periods	New Cases				Mortality			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Up to 1 yr. ...								
1-5 ...			1	1				
5-15 ...	1	1	5				1	
15-25 ...		2	1		2	1		
25-35 ...	4	2			1			
35-45 ...	1				3			
45-55 ...								
55-65 ...								
65 and upwards ...							1	
Unknown ...		1						
Totals ...	6	6	7	1	6	1	2	0

All deaths were of notified cases.

Factories Act, 1937.

Number of certificates granted during 1939 in respect of fire escapes 8

My thanks are due to the Mayor, Aldermen and Members of the Council, the Town Clerk and the Sanitary Inspectors for their assistance during the year.

I beg to remain,

Your obedient servant,

ARNOLD BROWN,

Medical Officer of Health